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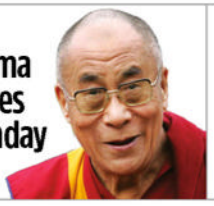
THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

NEWS
Dalai Lama celebrates big birthday
p3



BOOKS
New novel from Meg Medina!
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2025 Summer of Reading

HOW TO
Recipe for refreshing ice pops
p25

July 18, 2025 • Vol. 6, Issue 274 • $5.99

Making sense of the world

THE WEEK Junior

CITY BIRDS

Peregrine falcons, the super-fast feathered flyers, are thriving in US urban areas p10

THE BEST MAGAZINE FOR CURIOUS KIDS

DID YOU KNOW?
Texas occupies a total area of 268,597 square miles and has a population of 31.3 million people.

A rescue crew on the Guadalupe River

How you can help

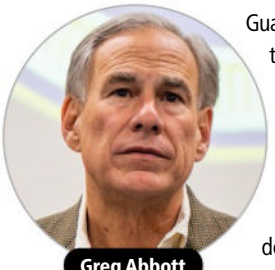
If you'd like to help people affected by the flooding, your family could contribute to an organization like the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army. Local groups to consider include the Kerr County Flood Relief Fund, which supports rescue and rebuilding, and Austin Pets Alive!, which helps injured and displaced pets.

Devastating floods in Texas

Raging floodwaters struck south-central Texas starting on July 4, causing extensive destruction and forcing evacuations at several summer camps. The disaster was one of the most catastrophic floods in the US in the past 100 years.

What happened?

Early in the morning on July 4, a slow-moving storm brought heavy rain to a part of Texas known as Hill Country. Up to 18 inches of rain fell. At about 4 a.m., the Guadalupe River began overflowing and the first reports came in about flash flooding (rapid rise of water along a stream or low-lying area, usually caused by heavy rainfall in a short amount of time). As rain continued, the Guadalupe rose 26 feet in about 45 minutes in the town of Comfort and reached up to 40 feet above the riverbed in other places. In one area, it reached the second-highest level on record.



Greg Abbott

What was the damage?

The severe flooding ripped down trees, swept away houses, tore roofs off buildings, and carried away cars. Water damaged roads, filled cabins at camps along the riverbank, and destroyed trailers parked at campgrounds. Power lines were knocked down, and many households in the region lost electricity. When *The Week Junior* went to press on July 8, at least 109 people had died in the flooding, including 27 campers and counselors at Camp Mystic, an all-girls camp on the banks of the river in Kerr County. Dozens of people were still missing.

Why did this happen?

Texas's Hill Country and the Guadalupe River Basin are known to be at high risk of flash flooding. The soil in the area is typically very dry and does not absorb water quickly. As a result, water moves along the surface instead of soaking into the ground and can quickly fill the many streams in the area. Those streams then flow into the Guadalupe, creating a surge of water that rises above its banks. On July 3, the National Weather Service (NWS) issued a flood watch for the area, later upgrading it to a more serious flood warning. Early in the morning on July 4, the NWS declared a flood emergency, which is an "exceedingly rare situation" with "a severe threat to human life." People were urged to seek higher ground, but the Guadalupe rose so quickly that there was little time to react.

How are people being helped?

More than 1,700 emergency workers, community members, and volunteers responded to the disaster. Some waded through the wreckage on horseback while others sped along the Guadalupe in boats, looking for survivors. More than 850 people were rescued using helicopters, boats, and trucks. Scott Ruskan, a Coast Guard rescue swimmer, saved 165 people at Camp Mystic by carrying flood victims to a helicopter, sometimes lifting two children with one arm. Emergency personnel opened aid stations for people whose homes were damaged or lost, and crews arrived from California, Florida, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Mexico to help. Animal rescue organizations worked to reunite pets with their families.

What will happen next?

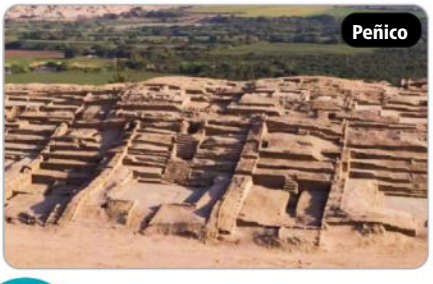
Texas authorities said the search for missing people will continue. Crews will also keep working to clean up debris and reopen roads. On July 6, President Donald Trump issued a disaster declaration that will send federal recovery funds to the area, including money for temporary housing and home repairs. Texas Governor Greg Abbott also declared disasters in 15 counties, giving people access to state money. Meanwhile, many people are calling for investigations into whether federal, state, and local authorities provided sufficient warning before the flooding and why no emergency sirens sounded.

Ancient lost city found in Peru

On July 3, scientists announced the discovery of a 3,500-year-old city in eastern Peru called Peñico. It is believed to have been a major trading hub that connected communities on the country's western coast with inland areas, including the Andes mountains and Amazon rainforest.

Archaeologists spent eight years excavating Peñico. They uncovered 18 structures, including ceremonial temples, homes, and a circular plaza. The plaza's walls were decorated with carvings of a trumpet called a *pututu*, which was made from a conch shell. They also found seashell necklaces, clay sculptures of people and animals, and ceremonial objects.

Peñico is thought to have been established between 1800 and 1500 BCE. Researchers said the city may have been settled by descendants of the Caral civilization, which once existed nearby and is the oldest known society in the Americas. Caral thrived 5,000 years ago but was devastated by harsh climate changes. Peñico could offer clues to what happened to its people.


Peñico

The Dalai Lama

MAN OF MANY NAMES
The name Dalai Lama means "Ocean of Wisdom" in Tibetan, and Tibetans also call him Yeshin Norbu or Kundun.

Spiritual leader celebrates birthday

The 14th Dalai Lama, one of the world's most notable religious leaders, celebrated his 90th birthday on July 6. The Dalai Lama is the main spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism and symbolic leader of the Tibetan people. Tibetan Buddhists believe that each Dalai Lama is a reincarnation (rebirth of a person's soul in a new body) of the previous one, and his purpose is to serve humanity.

Tibet is a region in China that was independent until China took control of it in 1950. Due to the conflict between the nations, the Dalai Lama has lived in exile in Dharamsala, India, since 1959.

The 14th Dalai Lama was born Lhamo Thondup in 1935. Since fleeing to Dharamsala, he has established a democratic government for Tibetans living in exile called the Central Tibetan Administration. He is also an advocate for peace, freedom, and cooperation among religions and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. He has advocated for a peaceful liberation of Tibet and the preservation of Tibetan history and culture.

Thousands of followers gathered at a special birthday ceremony at a temple in Dharamsala. The crowd included Buddhist monks and nuns as well as officials from countries including India, the US, the Czech Republic, and Sri Lanka. The ceremony included prayers, dancing, and traditional Tibetan music, including the Tibetan national anthem.

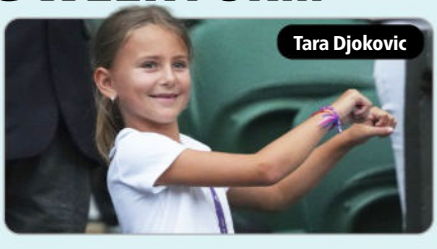
Speaking at the birthday event in India, the Dalai Lama said, "When I look back on my life, I see that I have not wasted it at all.... I am moved to serve others, and the more I do that the greater the joyful response I feel."

IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

TAKING THE TOP SPOT

Novel Ice Cream in Phoenix, Arizona, has frozen out the competition. Named the best ice cream shop in the nation by the review site Yelp, Novel is known for its Dough Melt—ice cream tucked inside a warm homemade doughnut.

A Dough Melt


Tara Djokovic

A FAMILY TRADITION

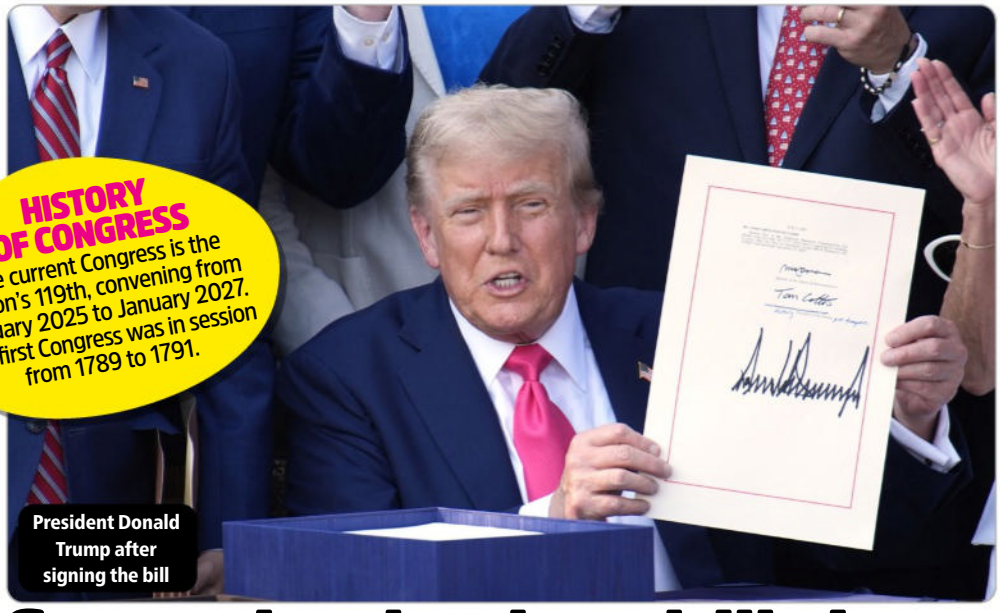
Tennis star Novak Djokovic won his 100th match at Wimbledon, a major tournament in the UK, but his 7-year-old daughter Tara stole the show. The crowd cheered as she did the family's special victory dance in the stands. "It's a little tradition we have," her father said. "She's the master."

A DINOSAUR DASH

Competition was fierce at the annual T-Rex World Championship Races in Washington. A prehistoric pack of more than 300 runners in inflatable dinosaur costumes stomped, skipped, and stumbled their way to the finish line. To top off the event, three skydivers dressed as dinos landed on the track.

The race

ON THE COVER: GETTY IMAGES; PARAMOUNT ANIMATION; GETTY IMAGES; JOY HOWARD; ON THIS PAGE: GETTY IMAGES; REUTERS; NOVEL ICE CREAM; AP (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2)



HISTORY OF CONGRESS
The current Congress is the nation's 119th, convening from January 2025 to January 2027. The first Congress was in session from 1789 to 1791.

President Donald Trump after signing the bill

The tiebreaking vote

When the vote on a bill is tied in the Senate, the US Vice President, who serves as the President of the Senate, may cast the tiebreaking vote. On July 1, the Senate vote on the budget bill resulted in a 50–50 tie. Vice President JD Vance then voted for the bill, making it 51–50. It was his fifth time breaking a tie in a Senate vote.

Sweeping budget bill signed into law

On July 4, President Donald Trump signed legislation he called the "One Big Beautiful Bill" into law at the White House. The new law is a large spending and tax bill that Trump, a Republican, had made a priority since taking office in January.

How did the bill reach the President?

The House of Representatives (one half of Congress, the branch of government that makes laws) created the legislation and sent it to the Senate (the other half of Congress) in May. After weeks of discussion and negotiation, it passed both houses along party lines, with nearly all Republicans voting for it and all Democrats opposed. The Senate approved it 51–50, and the House approved it 218–214. The 887-page bill was then sent to the President to sign into law.

What will the law do?

The legislation delivers on two promises Trump made during his campaign: tax cuts for upper-income Americans and corporations, and increased spending to prevent illegal immigration. More than $46.5 billion is allocated for border wall construction and related defense spending, for example. To pay for those decisions, cuts will be made to other spending programs. Much less money will go to Medicaid, which provides government-sponsored healthcare for low-income and disabled Americans. About 11.8 million Americans could lose their health coverage. Less funding will go to the SNAP food-assistance program, and state governments will receive less money for education and other expenses.

Incentives for purchasing electric vehicles will also end. The legislation will result in an estimated $3.4 trillion being added to the federal deficit (when a government spends more money than it collects in revenue) over the next 10 years.

How did people react?

At the signing, Trump said the new law would boost the American economy "like never before." House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, who spoke for more than eight hours to try to delay passage of the bill, breaking the record for the longest House floor speech, called the bill "immoral" and "cruel." Surveys show the new law is unpopular with the public. A recent Quinnipiac University poll found that 53% of registered voters opposed the bill, while 27% supported it.

WORD OF THE WEEK

CHERRY

The word "cherry" comes from the French word chérise**, and for a while, that was the English word too. Over time, the word's French origin was forgotten and people assumed it was a plural word. They began to use "cherry" for a single one and later "cherries" for more than one.**

THE WEEK IN HISTORY

July 13, 1985
Concerts held to combat famine

On July 13, 1985, two concerts, called Live Aid, were held, one in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the other in London, England. Top music artists, such as Bruce Springsteen, Elton John, and Madonna, came together to raise money for people in Africa who were suffering from famine (extreme lack of food). The concerts reached more than 1 billion people worldwide and raised more than $100 million.

Concertgoers

Zohran Mamdani

Upset in race for NYC mayor

In the Democratic primary election for New York City mayor, Zohran Mamdani, a state lawmaker who ran on a platform of making the city more affordable, defeated the other candidates, including former New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, who had been favored to win. Mamdani will face Republican nominee Curtis Sliwa—as well as Cuomo and current mayor Eric Adams, both of whom are running as Independents—on November 4 (Election Day).

WNBA expansion cities named

The WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) will add three teams starting in 2028. The teams will be based in Cleveland, Ohio; Detroit, Michigan; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They will join the league's 13 current teams, including the Golden State Valkyries, which began playing this year, as well as teams in Toronto, Canada, and Portland, Oregon, which will start playing in 2026.

Joey Chestnut

Big winner in hot dog contest

Joey Chestnut returned to Nathan's Famous International Hot Dog Eating Contest in Brooklyn, New York, on July 4, winning it for the 17th time. He ate 70.5 hot dogs in 10 minutes. His closest competitor ate 46.5 hot dogs. He was banned from the 2024 contest after working with a plant-based food company that is a competitor of Nathan's. Miki Sudo won the women's event, downing 33 franks.

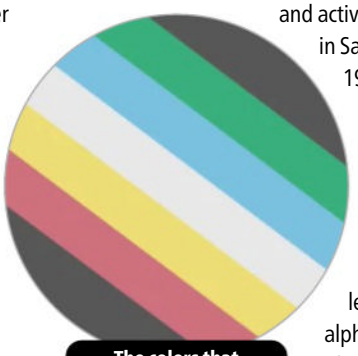
DID YOU KNOW? More than 25% of adults in the US have a disability.

Participants in a Disability Pride Parade in New York City

Disability Pride Month is observed

July is Disability Pride Month in the US. The month celebrates people with disabilities, recognizes their rights and achievements, and fosters a sense of pride within the disability community. This year's theme is "We Belong Here, and We're Here to Stay."

The timing of Disability Pride Month coincides with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which was signed into law on July 26, 1990, after decades of activism. The ADA banned discrimination against Americans with disabilities, requiring that they have the same opportunities to participate in society as everyone else. This includes equal access to public transportation, businesses, government services, and job opportunities.


The colors that symbolize the Disability Pride movement

The first Disability Pride Day took place in Boston in 1990, and 25 years later the observation expanded to the full month of July. In 2019, writer Ann Magill created the Disability Pride flag. It features many colors to symbolize different kinds of disabilities, including physical, emotional, and sensory (such as blindness and deafness).

This year, Disability Pride Month celebrations are happening in cities throughout the country. Frederick, Maryland, kicked off the month with an ice cream social on July 1. On July 10, Moorestown, New Jersey, will hold an Abilities Fest involving therapy dogs, crafts, and activities. A parade will be held in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on July 19. The city of Arlington, Texas issued a special proclamation to mark the month, and the New York Public Library in New York City is hosting events throughout July, including study groups for learning Braille (a raised alphabet that is used by people with vision impairments).

"To be proud of being disabled is to know we deserve more," said Lissie Cox, a writer and social media creator. "We have to fight for our rights and know we deserve to be treated with dignity and respect."

THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"'Naughty' bears escape, steal a week's worth of honey, and take long nap" ***The Washington Post***

AP; DESIGNED BY ANN MAGILL; GETTY IMAGES (3); WNBA; ON LEFT PAGE: AP; UNITED STATES SENATE; GETTY IMAGES (2)

Around the world

Mourners with flowers

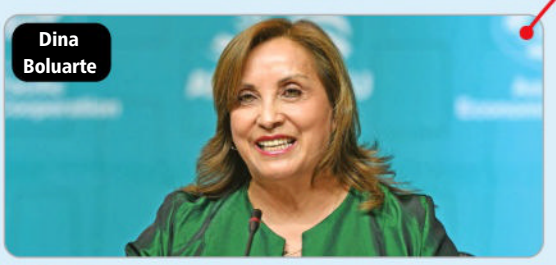
Gondomar, Portugal
Funeral held for famous athletes

A funeral for professional soccer players Diogo Jota and André Silva took place on July 5 in Gondomar, Portugal, where they grew up. The brothers died on July 3 following a car accident in Spain. Jota played for the English soccer club Liverpool, and Silva played for the Portuguese club Penafiel. A private ceremony was held at the Igreja Matriz church, while hundreds of mourners gathered outside.

A man being tested for malaria

Suriname
Country declared malaria-free

On June 30, the World Health Organization officially declared Suriname malaria-free. Malaria is a dangerous disease spread by some types of mosquitoes. Suriname achieved malaria-free status through policies such as ensuring that all people had access to treatment and checking people for malaria at the country's borders. "We are proud that our communities are now protected," said Suriname's minister of health, Amar Ramadhin.


Dina Boluarte

Lima, Peru
President doubles her salary

The president of Peru, Dina Boluarte, has doubled her salary to about $10,000 per month. Economy minister Rául Pérez-Reyes said the increase meant her wages now match the leaders of nearby countries. However, many Peruvians have expressed anger at the decision. Boluarte's approval rating is at a record low since she took office in 2022.

Paris, France
River opens for swimming

On July 5, the Seine River publicly opened for swimmers. Since 1923, swimming in the river has been banned because it was too polluted. Before hosting the 2024 Summer Olympics, Paris spent $1.5 billion cleaning up the Seine. Now there are three areas where people can swim for free during the summer. The water quality will be tested daily.

Parisians in the Seine

Crete, Greece
Wildfire rescue

More than 200 firefighters were sent out across eastern and southern Crete on July 2 to fight wildfires. About 5,000 people were evacuated from homes and hotels on the island, with many taking shelter in a basketball stadium. More fires broke out days later in other parts of Greece amid a scorching heat wave. Planes and helicopters dropped water to extinguish the flames, and on July 4, officials said the fire in Crete was out and nobody was hurt.

Firefighters battled the flames.

ALAMY (4); GETTY IMAGES (5); WHO

A Danish military parade

Denmark
Military service law changes

Under a new national law, women will have to sign up for potential service in the military. Previously, women could volunteer, but only men could be conscripted (made to serve in the military by law). Now both women and men must register at age 18. After volunteers are recruited, remaining spaces will be filled using a lottery system.

Lovebugs on a flower

Seoul, South Korea
Lovebugs swarm capital city

Swarms of lovebugs have invaded Korea's capital city and the surrounding area. These harmless insects usually live further south, where it is warmer, but experts say climate change has caused them to spread. Officials have set up insect traps in busy areas and told people not to wear bright colors or linger near lights at night, which can attract the insects. The bugs are expecte mid-July.

Pikachu (left) and Snorlax

Japan
Pokémon become sleep ambassadors

The Japanese government has made two Pokémon characters, Pikachu and Snorlax, official "sleep support ambassadors." Japan's health ministry recommends nine to 12 hours of sleep for elementary students and eight to 10 hours for older children. In 2023, the Pokémon Company released an app called Pokémon Sleep, which helps people track their sleep. Now Pikachu and Snorlax will take part in events to promote healthy sleep habits.

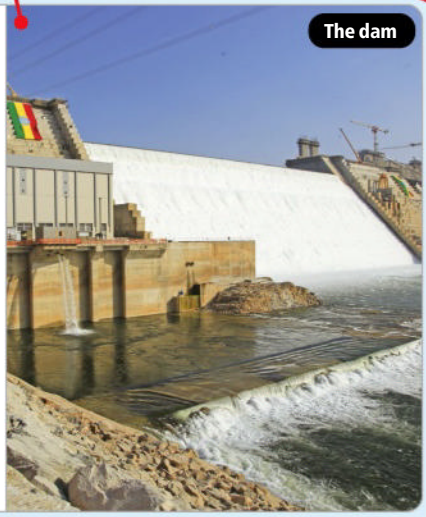
Afghans cross the border.

Iran
Afghan people forced to leave

In the past month, Iran has forced 250,000 Afghan people to return to Afghanistan. About 4 million Afghans fled to Iran in 2021 when the Taliban, an extremist group, returned to power in Afghanistan after 20 years. Iranian authorities recently set a deadline of July 6 for all Afghan people to leave Iran unless they have official documents allowing them to stay in the country.

Ethiopia
Dam completed

Ethiopia's prime minister, Abiy Ahmed Ali, announced on July 3 that construction of a dam on the Nile River had been completed. A dam is a barrier that controls the flow of water. The newly built Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam will use water power to generate electricity. The neighboring countries of Egypt and Sudan, however, rely on the Nile for water. They see the dam as a threat to their water supply because it could disrupt the river's flow.


The dam

Is it OK for restaurants to set an age limit?

Some people say it's not fair to families, while others say kids can ruin the vibe.

What you need to know

- **Restaurants are allowed to set their own rules on age requirements for customers, unless there are local laws stopping it.**
- **In recent years, restaurants around the world have experimented with policies that ban young children under a certain age.**
- **Some restaurants fear losing customers, but others believe that an age limit will attract a different set of diners who want a quiet, relaxed atmosphere.**

WOW! According to one estimate, the US has more than 700,000 restaurants and California has the most: about 85,000.

When a well-known Italian restaurant in New Jersey banned children under the age of 10 in 2023, it caused an uproar. The restaurant defended the move, saying children made a lot of noise, left big messes for their staff to clean up, and created safety hazards when they ran around. Many people took to social media to criticize the policy, while others said the restaurant had every right to set it. Similar debates have played out around the country as dining establishments try to balance customers and staff who want a calmer environment with families that want to eat out. What do you think? Is it OK for restaurants to set an age limit?

Yes—think about other diners

Many restaurants work hard to create a fine-dining experience with delicious food and attentive service. All that effort goes to waste, however, when there are kids running around and bumping into servers carrying food. That's stressful for the staff and unsafe for everyone. It's also not fair to other diners. They're spending hard-earned money and don't want to hear other people's kids talking loudly, crying, or watching videos on a device. And children often want simple foods. Not every restaurant can be expected to have a kids' menu, which makes more work for the kitchen staff. There are plenty of child-friendly places for families.

No—it's just not fair

Banning kids is not the solution. First of all, it's totally unfair to parents who just want to get out and enjoy a good meal. Not everyone who wants to eat out has access to childcare or can afford to pay for it, and they shouldn't have to stay home. Besides, not all kids behave poorly—and not all adults behave well. If kids aren't allowed because they can act up, then what about loud and unruly grown-ups? Should they be banned too? Besides, banning children is bad for business. The policies could offend families with younger kids, who may talk to their friends about it. Word travels fast, and the restaurant could lose customers.

YES Three reasons it is OK for restaurants to set an age limit

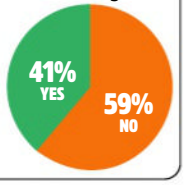
1. **Children can cause problems for staff and ruin a restaurant's efforts to create a nice experience for diners.**
2. **Diners are paying good money for the food and the experience and shouldn't have to see or hear other people's kids.**
3. **Not every chef or kitchen has the capacity to create a special kids' menu.**

NO Three reasons it is not OK for restaurants to set an age limit

1. **Keeping kids out isn't fair to parents who can't find or afford childcare.**
2. **It's wrong to assume that only children will be unruly. Adults can create a ruckus too, and no one is trying to ban them.**
3. **Parents who are upset about a policy might stop going to the restaurant and tell their friends. This is bad for business.**

LAST ISSUE'S POLL

In our last issue, we asked if the lake is better than the ocean. Most of you prefer crashing waves on an ocean beach to tranquil waters at a calm lake.



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote YES if you think it is OK for restaurants to set an age limit or NO if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.

GETTY IMAGES

The top of her game

Basketball legend Sue Bird is making history as Team USA's newest leader.

Sue Bird, one of the most decorated players in basketball history, has been named the first-ever managing director of the USA Basketball Women's National Team, putting her in charge of shaping the program's future.

Previously, a special committee selected players and coaches for the women's national team. The men's team has had a managing director since 2005. Now the women's team is getting one for the first time in its 50-year-history. In the role, Bird will guide Team USA to the 2026 FIBA World Cup and the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, California.

On the court in 2009

Raised in Syosset, New York, Bird started playing basketball at age 5. After winning state and national titles for her high school team, she led the University of Connecticut Huskies to two NCAA championships and earned multiple national player of the year honors.

In 2002, Bird was the first overall pick in the WNBA Draft by the Seattle Storm to play point guard. She spent her career there until retiring in 2022 with four WNBA championships and 13 All-Star selections—the most by any player. Bird competed in five Olympic Games with Team USA, winning gold each time. She was inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame earlier this year.

Bird said she is looking forward to bringing her experience on the court to leadership off it. "I know what it's like to be a player, to build teams, and to see what makes them click," she told the *Associated Press*. "I love representing my country [and] to have that opportunity to do it in a different role is exciting."

Sue Bird

GOING FOR GOLD
Basketball became an official Olympic sport for women in 1976, and Team USA won its first gold medal in 1984.

Feeding the future

Brazilian scientist Mariangela Hungria has won the 2024 World Food Prize, the world's highest honor in agriculture, for her pioneering research in sustainable farming. Hungria, a microbiologist, has spent 40 years studying soil bacteria that can help crops grow through natural methods instead of harmful chemical fertilizers. Amid critics' doubts about her approach, she worked with farmers and helped Brazil become the world's top soybean producer. Her work also increased food production, which supported global efforts to fight hunger. The $500,000 prize honors her mission.

Mariangela Hungria

Tom Cruise

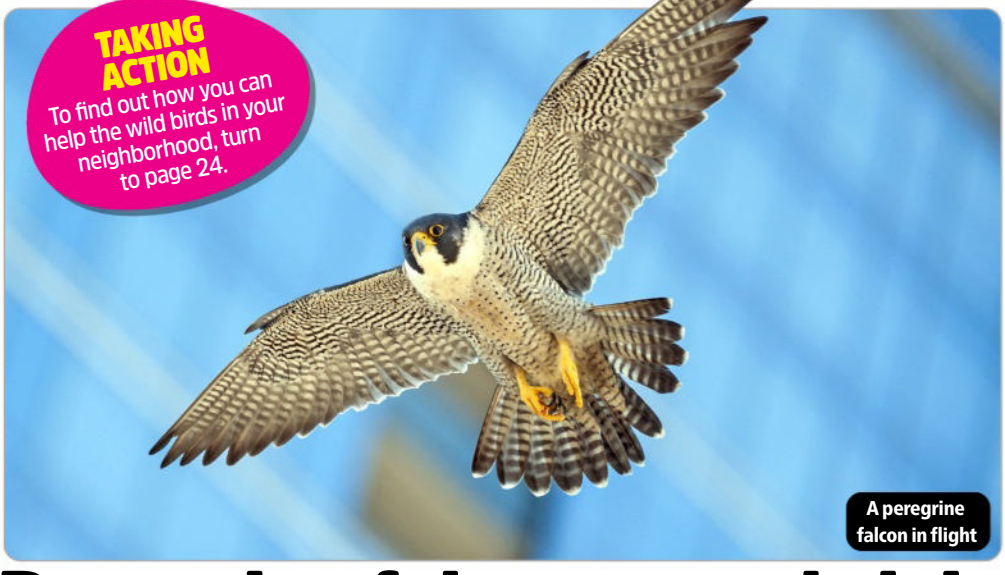
Fearless film star

Award-winning actor Tom Cruise has set a world record for the most burning parachute jumps by one person. For a scene in *Mission: Impossible—The Final Reckoning*, which premiered in May, he jumped from a helicopter at 7,500 feet high with his parachute ignited mid-air. Cruise completed the stunt 16 times, sometimes wearing a 50-pound camera rig for close-ups. Known for doing his own stunts, Cruise was awarded the title on June 4 by Guinness World Records, which praised his "utter fearlessness" in moviemaking.

OVERHEARD

"Giving people different entry points into learning about dance and feeling like they can be a part of it...has been my goal."
Misty Copeland, the first Black woman to be named a principal dancer of the American Ballet Theatre, after announcing that she will be retiring from the company this fall

GETTY IMAGES (4); COURTESY OF WORLD FOOD PRIZE



TAKING ACTION
To find out how you can help the wild birds in your neighborhood, turn to page 24.

A peregrine falcon in flight

Chick names announced

Two peregrine falcon chicks hatched this spring in a nest on the University of Michigan campus. A contest to name them was held online, and more than 1,400 submissions were received from the public. The young birds will be called Victoria and Valiant.

Victoria

Peregrine falcons are thriving in cities

Populations of peregrine falcons appear to be successfully living and growing in big cities in the US, according to a report from the Associated Press. Scientists and conservationists see this as a promising sign because peregrine populations in other parts of the country are declining.

Peregrine falcons can be found throughout the world, with three subspecies living in North America. These keen hunters are known to reach spectacular speeds, flying high in the sky and then zooming down to catch their prey—mostly other birds such as pigeons, ducks, and jays.

New York City staff checks on chicks.

In recent years, the avian flu has spread throughout the US, infecting many of the species falcons eat. As a result, some peregrines have become infected and died. Falcons that live on the coasts are especially vulnerable because their prey—waterfowl such as ducks and geese—tend to gather in large groups, making it easier for the disease to spread. Because of this, peregrine populations have dropped in parts of New Jersey, Virginia, California, and Alaska.

Peregrines living in cities, on the other hand, have not been as affected by bird flu. These resourceful birds have also been able to establish new homes for themselves on buildings and other structures. In New York City, for instance, peregrines have built a nest on top of the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge, where baby birds recently hatched. Some of the young peregrines that hatch in cities are now moving to shoreline areas as they grow up, possibly in large enough numbers to help coastal populations bounce back.

As peregrine falcons have begun to thrive in cities, people have set up live cameras at their nests, streaming the birds' activities to thousands of followers worldwide. Scientists have even been able to attach ankle trackers to some falcons to monitor their movements. Christopher Nadareski, a scientist with the city's Department of Environmental Protection, told the Associated Press that there are currently about 30 nesting pairs of peregrines in New York City. "Wildlife can really adapt to these harsh urban environments," he said. Despite challenging living conditions, "they still find ways to survive," Nadareski said.

PLACE OF THE WEEK

North Cascades National Park, Washington

There are more than 300 glaciers in North Cascades National Park in Washington—more than in any other US park outside Alaska. The park is also known for its mountains, ancient forests, cascading waterfalls, rivers, and hundreds of lakes and ponds. Black bears, gray wolves, cougars, river otters, and Pacific treefrogs live in the park, while salmon swim in the Skagit River. Hikers and backpackers have access to more than 400 miles of trails with views of the North Cascades, the most rugged mountain range in the contiguous US (the 48 adjoining states).

A river otter

ITSY BITSY
The tiniest known frog species, the Brazilian flea toad, is smaller than a fingernail.

The "blue-green" species

Colorful new frog species discovered

A new, brightly colored poison dart frog has been discovered in the Juruá River basin in the Amazon rainforest. There are nearly 200 known species of poison dart frogs, which have bright colors and highly toxic skin. These frogs are vital to the ecosystem (group of living things that affect each other) because they help control the insect population.

A team of scientists in Brazil found the unknown species, which belongs to the genus Ranitomeya. It was the first discovery of a new frog in this genus in 13 years. The tiny amphibian, measuring about the size of a nickel, has metallic blue-green and black stripes on its body and orange-spotted limbs. They named the species Ranitomeya aquamarina, a Latin word meaning blue-green.

Experts say finding these shiny new frogs is a good sign for the health of the rainforest. It also suggests that more unknown species may be living in the area, waiting to be revealed. "We hope that our research will stimulate more interest in this region and provide important information for its protection," said lead author Evan Koch.

Animal of the week: Helmeted honeyeater

Helmeted honeyeaters have returned to Cardinia, Australia, for the first time in 42 years. The birds disappeared from the area after wildfires. Experts bred 21 birds in captivity and have released them in the hope that they will stay and breed.

- **LIFE SPAN:** Up to 6 years
- **HABITAT:** Forests near water or swamps
- **SIZE:** About 8 inches long
- **DIET:** Insects, nectar, and tree sap
- **FUN FACT:** Known as HeHo for short, they are the official bird of the Australian state of Victoria.

Good week / Bad week

Coastal green hairstreaks
Conservation efforts in San Francisco, California, are helping to increase the population of these rare butterflies. Although they were once thought to be extinct in the city, dozens of the butterflies were spotted there this spring.

Dragon's blood trees
These mushroom-shaped trees with blood-red sap grow only on an island called Socotra in the Arabian Sea. However, their survival is now at risk for several reasons, including tropical storms and goats that eat young trees.

ASK AN EXPERT: "How can cotton-top tamarins make so many different sounds?" Tyler, 12, Michigan

Trish Khan
Curator of primates and small mammals, Milwaukee County Zoo

Just as we can change our voice depending on the situation, cotton-top tamarins can do the same with their vocalizations. They use more than 30 distinct sounds to express emotions such as joy, curiosity, fear, and playfulness, or to alert the group about food or danger.

Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to hello@theweekjunior.com.
Find out more about the Milwaukee County Zoo at milwaukeezoo.org.

ALEXANDER TAMANINI MÓNICO; ALAMY; GETTY IMAGES (3); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3); UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN; METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

2025 Summer of Reading

A teen detective and

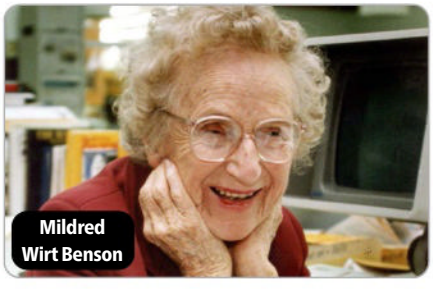
Nancy Drew has entertained and influenced readers for decades.

One of literature's most famous sleuths turns 95 this year. Find out more about Nancy Drew and the mark she made on American culture.

Nancy's car

How the books began

On April 28, 1930, three books were published featuring a teen detective named Nancy Drew who lived in the fictional town of River Heights. Carolyn Keene was listed as the author of these novels, titled *The Secret of the Old Clock*, *The Hidden Staircase*, and *The Bungalow Mystery*. Unusually for a young female character of her time, Nancy was intelligent, courageous, and independent. Her father, lawyer Carson Drew, encouraged her to follow her instincts about people and situations. Driving around in her car, Nancy braved perilous circumstances in the pursuit of truth and justice. With boyfriend Ned Nickerson and friends Helen Corning, Bess Marvin, and George Fayne, Nancy solved dozens of mysteries.


Mildred Wirt Benson

Who was Carolyn Keene?

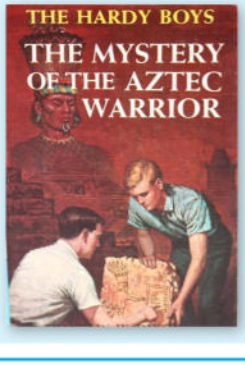
The "author" of the Nancy Drew Mystery Stories, Carolyn Keene, did not exist. The books were written by ghostwriters—people who are hired to write a work that is published under someone else's name. Publisher Edward Stratemeyer, who had created the popular Hardy Boys mystery series a few years earlier, invented the original storylines. He gave the first few outlines to Mildred Wirt Benson, an adventurous journalist, to write the books. After Stratemeyer died, his daughters, Harriet Stratemeyer Adams and Edna Stratemeyer Squier, wrote the outlines for Benson. In the 1950s, Adams became the books' main author.

SKY'S THE LIMIT
Mildred Wirt Benson, author of the first 23 Nancy Drew books, earned her commercial pilot's license at age 59.

COLOR CHANGE
Nancy's car is often described as blue, but it has also been depicted as yellow, green, and maroon.

More famous mysteries

Nancy Drew isn't the only teen sleuth who has captivated readers for decades. Here are three other successful detective series for young readers.



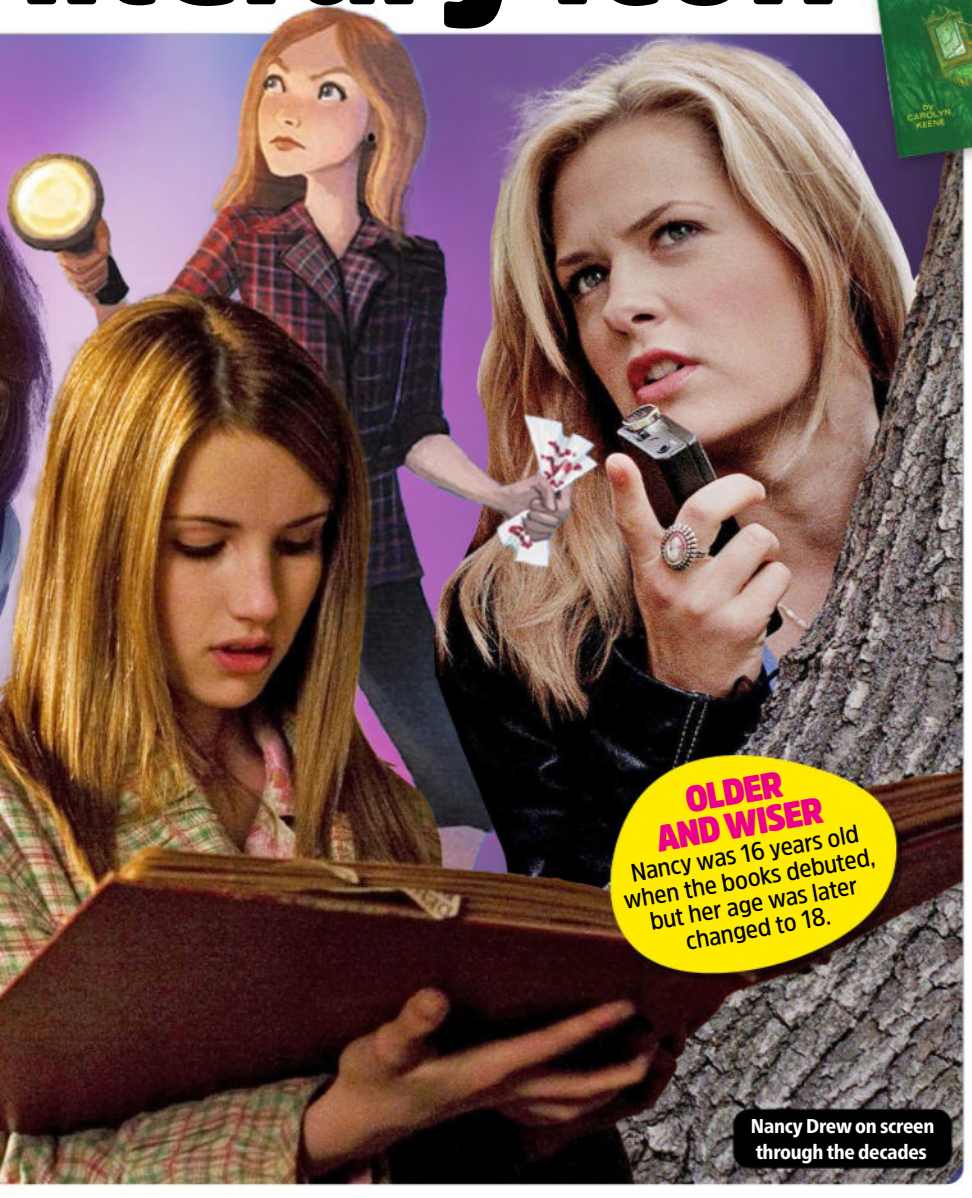
The Hardy Boys

First published in 1927, these famous novels follow brothers Frank and Joe Hardy, who solve crimes together in the fictional town of Bayport. Frank tends to be cautious and logical, while Joe is impulsive and humorous. The boys have even teamed up with Nancy Drew to solve "Super Mysteries."

ROBERT FALCONER/THE CW; GETTY IMAGES (2); ALADDIN; ALAMY; SHUTTERSTOCK (2); REUTERS/TOLEDO BLADE PHOTO BY DIANE HIRES; BOOKS COURTESY THE PUBLISHERS (6)

literary icon

A few of the books



Nancy Drew on screen through the decades

Becoming a bestseller

The Nancy Drew Mystery Stories series was an immediate success. *Publishers Weekly* magazine praised the series as a "top-notch seller" in 1932, and the following winter Macy's department store ordered 6,000 copies and sold out in days. As time went on, Nancy appeared in more than 370 books in several different collections, including *The Nancy Drew Files* (1986–97), *Nancy Drew, Girl Detective* (2004–12), and the *Nancy Drew Diaries* (2013–now). She was featured in several films and TV series, starring actresses such as Bonita Granville, Emma Roberts, and Sophia Lillis as the hunch-following heroine. During the 1990s and 2000s, Nancy starred in more than 30 video games.

Fan art

Influencing generations

More than 70 million copies of the Nancy Drew Mystery Stories have been sold around the world, and the books have been translated into more than 20 languages. Some fans became so passionate that when the Nancy Drew Conference was held at the University of Iowa in 1993, about 500 people—including children, teachers, librarians, collectors, and scholars—attended to share their enthusiasm. These conventions have continued through the years, with the next one scheduled for October 1–5 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Many public figures—such as US Supreme Court justice Sonia Sotomayor, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and TV journalist Gayle King—have said that they were inspired by reading Nancy Drew. In 2017, Clinton called Nancy a role model for girls because she was "such a go-getter, and really smart and brave." She later added, "Those kinds of stories are still relevant today."

The Dana Girls

Written by "Carolyn Keene" between 1934 and 1979, these stories feature two teenage orphans, Jean and Louise Dana. The sleuthing sisters investigate mysteries while attending boarding school and contending with their bullying rival, Lettie Briggs.

Trixie Belden

At Crabapple Farm in New York's Hudson River Valley, detective Trixie Belden handles cases along with her best friend Honey Wheeler and other members of their club, the Bob-Whites of the Glen. The series appeared in print from 1948 to 1986.

SMART SOLUTION
In 1785, Benjamin Franklin invented bifocal lenses that let people see near and far because he was tired of switching glasses.

A participant in the study inserts one of the lenses.

Lenses offer night vision

Scientists in China said they have created night-vision contact lenses that can give people "super vision." The breakthrough technology may be able to correct color blindness as well.

There are many different kinds of light, but the human eye can see only a small portion of them. The range of light we can see is called visible light. One of the types of light we cannot naturally see is called infrared. Some animals, like snakes, can see infrared light.

The new lenses are made of flexible, nontoxic materials that are used for soft contact lenses. Nanoparticles (particles so tiny they can't be seen by the human eye) embedded in the lenses absorb infrared light and convert it into visible light. Being able to see infrared light makes it possible for people to see in the dark, essentially giving us night vision.

Conducting the study

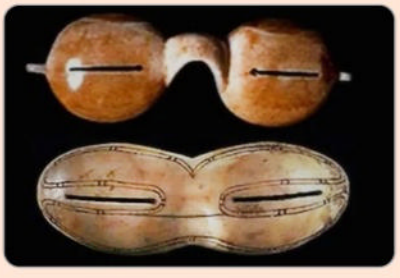
Researchers tested the new lenses in mice, which naturally seek out darkness to avoid predators. Given the choice between dark boxes and those illuminated by infrared light, mice with the lenses chose the dark boxes. This indicated they could see the infrared. Mice without the lenses showed no preference between the two boxes. The animals' pupils also shrank when exposed to the infrared light, and brain scans showed that the areas of their brain responsible for visual processing were working.

Humans tested the lenses next. When their eyes were open, they perceived flickering infrared light and sensed what direction it was coming from. Because the lenses were clear, they could also see the usual range of visible light. And when they closed their eyes, they could still see the flickering infrared light. The researchers said this is because visible light gets filtered out by our eyelids, while infrared light passes through them. "It's totally clear-cut: Without the contact lenses, the subject cannot see anything," said Tian Xue, the study's senior author. "But when they put them on, they can clearly see the...infrared light."

The non-invasive lenses could provide an alternative to existing night-vision goggles, which are bulky devices that require a power source. The lenses can also be modified to pick up light in different colors, like red, blue, and green, which could help people with color blindness. Currently, the lenses only work with light from very bright sources, but the team hopes to boost their sensitivity in order to pick up lower-intensity light.

Vision milestones

Eyeglasses **The first eyeglasses, made in the 1200s, consisted of two lenses connected by a rivet and placed on the bridge of the nose. A later version, called a pince-nez (above), clipped onto the nose. Eyeglasses as we know them were invented in 1727 by a British eye doctor. He placed glass lenses into heavy frames of wood, lead, or copper. Later versions included frames of leather, bone, and horn.**



Sunglasses **Thousands of years ago, members of the Inuit tribe in the Arctic developed the first sunglasses to reduce the glare from sunlight reflecting off ice and snow. The goggles were made from walrus ivory, bone, or wood (above). Narrow slits blocked light and protected people from a condition called snow blindness, which can damage vision.**

Contact lenses **In 1801, English scientist Thomas Young attached water-filled lenses to his eyes with wax. His invention didn't take off, but he advanced scientific knowledge of vision correction. In the late 1880s, the first contact lenses were made with ground glass (above). They were hard and uncomfortable. Modern soft lenses became available in the 1960s.**

Scientists solve mystery of orange cat fur

For more than 100 years, scientists have wondered how orange cats get their distinctive fur. Now two teams of researchers think they've found the answer—and it's due to the cats' genes.

Genes are sections of DNA (a chemical that carries all the information about a living thing). They give instructions to cells and determine things like eye and hair color. Scientists from Stanford University in California and Kyushu University in Japan pinpointed the gene that gives orange cats their colorful fur.

The teams compared the DNA of cats with orange fur to other cats' DNA. They found that orange ones have a section of DNA missing from a gene called ARHGAP36. This change makes the gene more active and instructs the cats' cells to produce a lighter pigmentation (color) that results in orange fur.

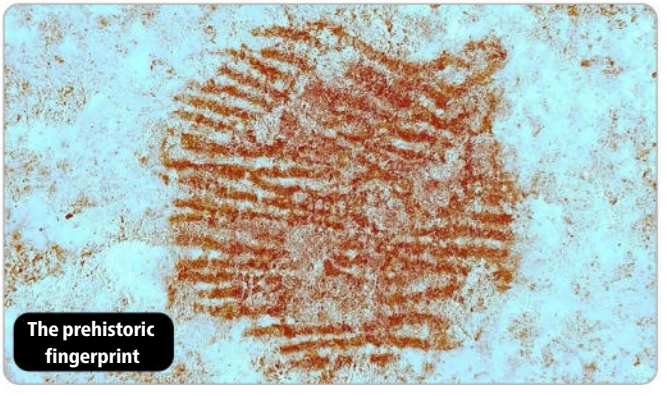
The study was guided by previous research that found that most orange cats are male. The orange gene is carried within the X chromosome. (Chromosomes are long strings of genes.) Like all mammals, male cats have an X and a Y chromosome and females have two X chromosomes.

A female cat needs both parents to carry the orange gene for her to also be orange, while male cats need only their mother to have the orange gene. Many mammals, like cheetahs and golden retrievers, have orange fur, but cats are the only ones whose orange color is connected to their sex.

FAMOUS FELINES

Many famous fictional cats are orange, including Garfield, Puss in Boots, and Hermione Granger's cat Crookshanks in Harry Potter.

Research shows that 80% of orange cats are male.



The prehistoric fingerprint

World's oldest fingerprint found

A mark left by a Neanderthal about 43,000 years ago is the oldest known fingerprint ever discovered. It was found on a 6-inch-long rock in a cave in Spain. Scientists also believe it is one of the earliest examples of symbolic art, which uses artistic elements to represent something else.

Neanderthals lived about 400,000 to 40,000 years ago and are considered the closest extinct relative of modern humans. The fingerprint was made with red mineral ocher, a natural pigment used at that time.

Using high-tech scans and a digital 3D model of the rock, the researchers saw that the red dot had a pattern of swirls and spirals, characteristic of a fingerprint. They believe the rock is shaped like a face and the fingerprint was intentionally put there to represent the nose.

Other scientists disagree and said more evidence is needed to draw a conclusion about the print's purpose.

AMAZING INVENTION

A robot that teaches tennis

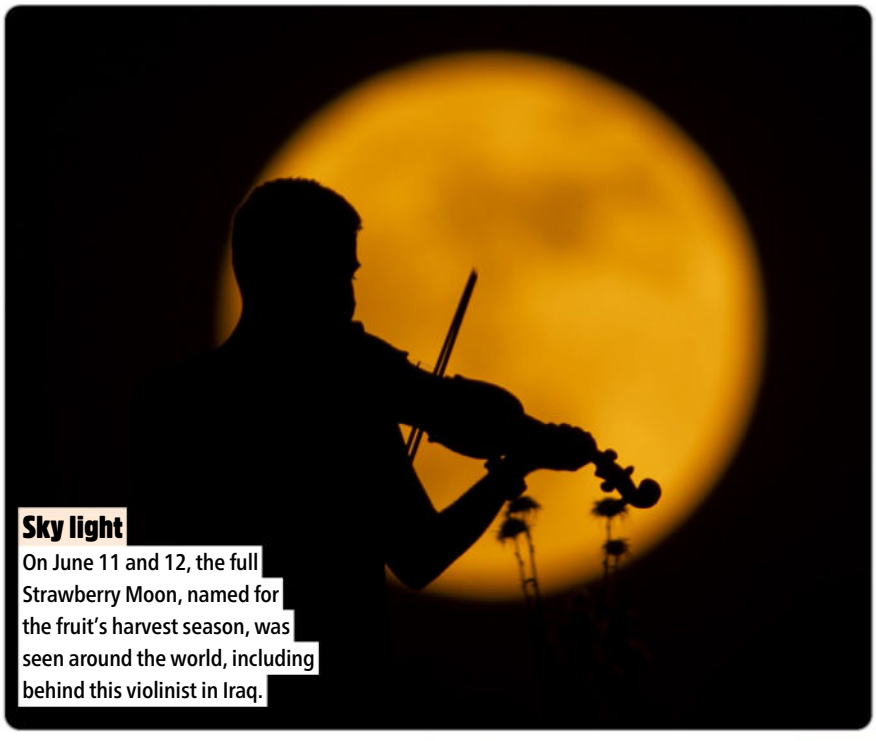
Tenniix

A smart robot uses artificial intelligence to help tennis players boost their game. Tenniix is like a coach and an opponent, shooting the ball across the net to help players practice. It has built-in cameras to track players' positions and movements, and it adjusts the speed, angle, and style of its shots to suit their skill level.

Tenniix comes with a wristband that responds to voice commands or hand gestures. It can capture video of the game and track players' statistics. Its creators said it will be available this summer.

GETTY IMAGES; ÁLVAREZ-ALONSO ET AL. 2025; T-APEX; ON LEFT PAGE: YUQIAN MA, YUNUO CHEN, HANG ZHAO (2); REDDIT.COM (2); ALAMY

Photos of the week



Sky light
On June 11 and 12, the full Strawberry Moon, named for the fruit's harvest season, was seen around the world, including behind this violinist in Iraq.

High rise
This multiple-exposure image was captured in Shenyang, China.

Spot-on
This scene was photographed in Istanbul, Turkey.

GETTY IMAGES (6)

Photos of the week

Shine on
A temple added to the glow in Qingzhou, China.

Night vision
This shot was taken at the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, DC.

Burst of blue
In New York City, the Moon floated past the Empire State Building.

LONG HISTORY
The US and Mexico men's national soccer teams played their first match against each other in 1934.

Mexico's national team celebrates their Gold Cup win.

The Gold Cup ball

The tournament's official ball was the new Molten Concacaf Gold Vantaggio 5000. It is covered with gold accents that symbolize "the pursuit of victory and glory," as well as diamond motifs. The ball will be used in future national team competitions as well.

Mexico beats US in Gold Cup final

From June 14 to July 6, men's national soccer teams from North America, Central America, and the Caribbean competed in the 2025 Concacaf Gold Cup. The tournament is held every two years and crowns the regional champion. The US and Mexico, longtime rivals, met in the final at NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas, where Mexico, the defending champions, beat the US, 2–1. Mexico now has 10 Gold Cup titles, the most in the tournament's history.

Edson Alvarez

The Gold Cup action began with 16 teams, including one from Saudi Arabia, a guest nation. The teams were divided into four groups for the first stage, and the top two from each one advanced to the knockout rounds.

The US men's national team (USMNT) Gold Cup roster lacked many of its top players, who were resting or playing in the Club Word Cup. Still, the team ended the group stage with two wins and a draw. They defeated Costa Rica in a penalty shootout in the quarterfinals, then beat Guatemala in the semifinals.

Mexico had two wins and a draw in the group stage, eliminated Saudi Arabia in the quarterfinals, and shut out Honduras in the semis. This was the eighth time the US and Mexico met in a Gold Cup final. The last time was in 2021, and the US won that match. This year, the US seized early control, opening scoring in the fourth minute when Chris Richards received a cross from Sebastian Berhalter and headed the ball into the back of the net. Mexico's Raul Jimenez scored the equalizer in the 27th minute, with an assist from Marcel Ruiz, and the first half ended in a tie.

The teams traded scoring chances in the second half, but Mexico took the lead in the 77th minute, with a goal by Edson Alvarez, who headed a cross from Johan Vasquez. The US generated an excellent scoring chance in the match's final moments, but it was saved by Mexico's goalkeeper. After the match, USMNT players and their manager, Mauricio Pochettino, voiced concerns about missed calls by the referees, including an obvious overlooked handball.

The Gold Cup final was the last competitive contest for both teams before their countries co-host the FIFA World Cup with Canada next year.

THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

COLLEGE SPORTS

On June 30, University of Virginia swimmer Gretchen Walsh was named the 2024–2025 Collegiate Woman Athlete of the Year and awarded the Honda Cup. The two-time Olympic gold medalist won seven college swimming titles in 2025. The other two finalists for the award were former University of Connecticut basketball player Paige Bueckers and Texas Tech softball pitcher NiJaree Canady.

Faith Kipyegon

TRACK AND FIELD

Two Kenyans broke world records at the Prefontaine Classic on July 5. Beatrice Chebet became the first woman to run the 5,000-meter race in under 14 minutes, and Faith Kipyegon now has the fastest women's 1,500-meter time.

TENNIS

At Wimbledon, one of the four major tennis tournaments, three players from the US made the singles quarterfinals: Amanda Anisimova, Taylor Fritz, and Ben Shelton.

MAJOR MOMENT
In 2002, Lisa Leslie became the first WNBA player to make a slam dunk in a game.

Indiana Fever star Aliyah Boston holds up the Commissioner's Cup trophy.

Fever win the Commissioner's Cup

On July 1, the WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) finished its annual in-season tournament, the Commissioner's Cup. The championship game was played at the Target Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and featured the Indiana Fever from the Eastern Conference and the Minnesota Lynx from the Western Conference. The Lynx, who were the reigning Commissioner's Cup champions and have the best WNBA record this season, were upset by the Fever, 74–59. It was the first time the Fever won the Commissioner's Cup.

All 13 WNBA teams played in the tournament. The first part ran from June 1 to June 17, when each team played a game against every other team in their conference. Those games doubled as regular-season games. The Lynx and Fever had the best records from those competitions, so they represented their conferences in the final, which did not count toward their regular-season records. Fever star Caitlin Clark was injured and did not compete in any Commissioner's Cup games.

The Lynx had a strong start in the final and were up 27–14 early in the second quarter. Then the Fever bounced back, scoring the final 18 points of the half to take a 32–27 lead. The Lynx ended their scoring drought early in the third quarter. But as the fourth quarter began, the Fever were ahead, 52–42, and never gave up the lead.

Five Fever players scored at least 12 points in the game. Natasha Howard had 16 points and 12 rebounds and was named the final's Most Valuable Player. With the win, players on Indiana's roster will get up to $30,000 each in prize money.

COACH OF THE WEEK

Coach's Name: **Shanoi Martinez**

Team: **Teaneck Southern Titans 9U (baseball)**

"Coach Shanoi is kind, generous, and always helps and supports us. He never gives up on us, and he always cheers us on. When he pushes us, he also makes sure we don't overdo it. He motivates us so we can do hard things. He also got us into the championships for our first tournament. He says it doesn't matter if you make a mistake, and as long as you give 110% all game, you're fine. He also makes sure we have fun!" Oliver, 9, New Jersey

To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.

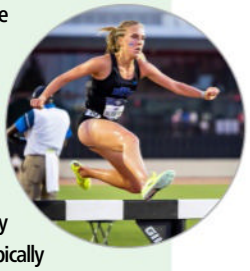
SPOTLIGHT ON...

Lexy Halladay-Lowry

AGE: 23 SPORT: CROSS COUNTRY
TEAM: BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

Impressive start In elementary school, we ran a mile for PE. At home, I told my dad about my time, and he didn't believe it. We re-measured where I ran, and it was a mile. He said, "You should do a track race this summer." At that point, I was playing soccer and basketball, but I ran the race. It was fun, and I won. That's how I got into track.

Top icons My first role model was soccer player Mia Hamm. In photos she looked so strong, intense, and passionate about what she was doing. I wanted to pursue something in athletics and give off the same aura.



Solo sport I love the honesty of running. What you put in is typically what you get out of it. You're not dependent on a referee or someone for playing time. The outcome is based on how well you prepared to handle adversity in the race.

Training plan I run an average of 48 to 55 miles a week, depending on the time of year.

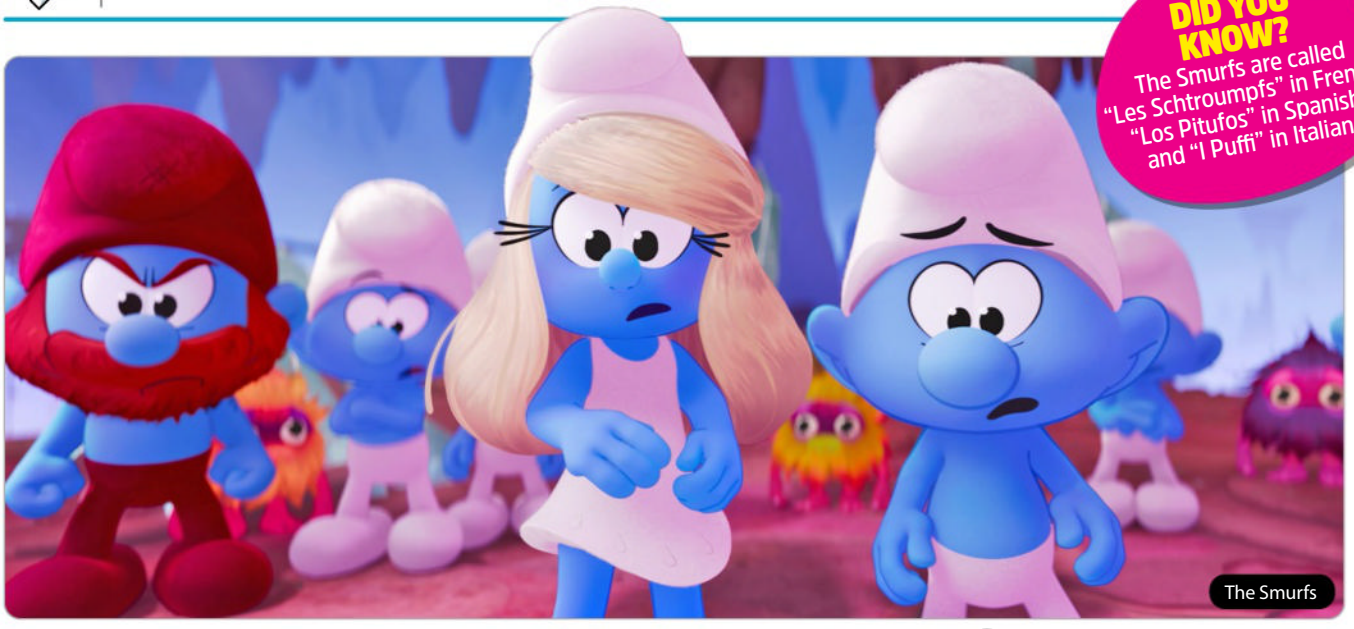
Key recaps The worst thing you can do after a bad race is mope and beat yourself up over it. I'll look at what happened going into the race and what happened during the race, sticking to the facts. I try to break it down and learn from it.

Big accomplishment This past cross-country season, we won the NCAA title as a team. I had a hip injury and really couldn't run leading up to the race. I'm so proud of how I showed up and was able to help my team win that title.

Wise words In any sport, learn to love it not for the outcomes but for the pure joy of being in it.

AP; BYU ATHLETICS (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3); MOLTEN/CONCACAF

DID YOU KNOW?
The Smurfs are called "Les Schtroumpfs" in French, "Los Pitufos" in Spanish, and "I Puffi" in Italian.

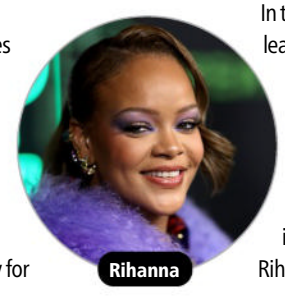

The Smurfs

The return of the Smurfs

The famous blue characters are back in a new music-filled animated comedy-adventure with pop star Rihanna.

Since 1958, comic book, TV, and movie fans have been entertained by the Smurfs, a group of little blue creatures who live hidden in a forest. It has been eight years since their last big film, and now they're heading back to theaters in a new adventure. *The Smurfs*, their first full-length musical film, combines 2D animation, computer-generated imagery, and live action. It will open on July 18.

The Smurfs were created by Belgian cartoonist Pierre Culliford, whose pen name was Peyo. He first put them in a story for one of his *Johan and Peewit* comics, and they soon had their own series. The characters are famously described as being "three apples high," have names that match their personalities or skills, and use variations of "smurf" in place of many words.


Rihanna

In the film, Papa Smurf, the group's wise leader, is captured by evil wizard brothers Gargamel and Razamel. Smurfette (voiced by pop star Rihanna) leads a rescue mission into the real world and across dimensions to save him. The soundtrack has 14 original songs, including "Friend of Mine," which Rihanna recorded for the movie.

The Smurfs was directed by Chris Miller. He was introduced to the characters through their 1980s cartoon series, then became a fan of the comics. "The design, style, and tone of the original creation left an unforgettable impression on me," he told *The Week Junior*. He said his goal was to honor the comics and make the film feel like "the very first Smurf movie ever made." He added that it "finally answers the question: What is a Smurf?"

Miller said the Smurfs have "a simple, magical joy," and he hopes audiences can learn from them. He added, "Smurfs are about community—knowing that you're part of something where everyone belongs. That's the Smurfs' superpower."

Facts about the Smurfs

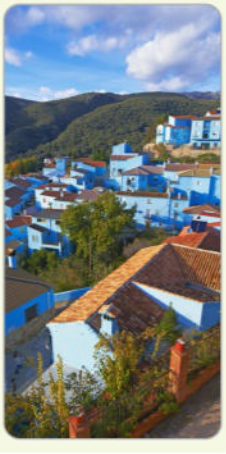
Origin story

Pierre Culliford (right, in 1984) said the Smurfs were inspired by Nordic trolls. He made them blue because it was a color for kids. He thought red was too violent, and yellow reminded him of illness.

Hat style

The Smurfs wear cone-shaped hats with forward-leaning tips, a style called a Phrygian cap. The caps can be seen on sculptures from ancient Greece and art representing mythological figures (right). A similar style was popular during the French Revolution.

Special location



The village of Júzcar, in southern Spain (right), was painted blue to celebrate the premiere of a Smurfs movie in 2011. It is still blue, known as "Smurf Town," and welcomes an average of 250 tourists a day.

REAL PEOPLE
Lewis Carroll's real name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, and his character Alice was based on a real girl.

The White Rabbit in Alice's Wonderland

Classic story comes to garden

At the Atlanta Botanical Garden in Georgia, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the famous story by Lewis Carroll, has been brought to life with plants in an exhibition called *Alice's Wonderland*. It features 38 large sculptures that make up seven scenes inspired by the tale.

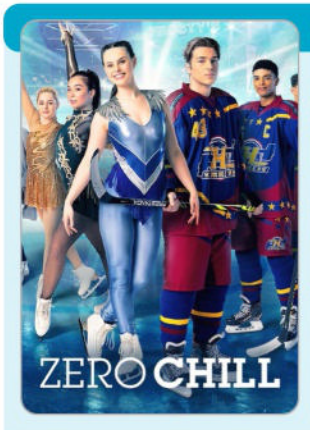
The art in the garden is a style known as mosaiculture. It is made by covering steel frames with a special fabric that holds in soil and allows plants to grow out of it. The pieces were created by Mosaïcultures Internationales de Montréal, a group in Canada with a team of experts that include landscape architects, engineers, and artists. "We consider ourselves a living museum, and mosaiculture is 3D, living sculpture," Amanda Bennett, the garden's vice president of horticulture and collections, told *The Week Junior*.

The Cheshire Cat

Alice's Wonderland has characters such as the White Rabbit, the Queen of Hearts, and the Cheshire Cat. The garden has other mosaiculture sculptures on display, too, including *Earth Goddess* and *Shaggy Dog*. More than 30 different plant types cover the sculptures, and it took horticulturists (experts in growing plants) more than 4,400 hours to build and plant the structures. They used nearly 384,000 staples and close to 15,000 zip ties to hold the fabric on the frames. Five horticulturists keep the sculptures watered and fertilized, and they trim them every two weeks.

One goal of the *Alice's Wonderland* exhibition is to wow visitors. "Seeing plants used to 'color' in sculptures isn't something you see just anywhere," Bennett said. "Connecting people with plants is the bottom line of what we do, and these sculptures are a very fun way of doing that."

READER RECOMMENDS



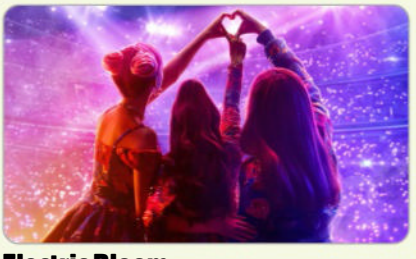
Zero Chill (Netflix)
"This show is about twin siblings Kayla, a figure skater, and Mac, a hockey player. They are from Canada, but when Mac gets a scholarship to attend a hockey school in London, Kayla is forced to move there too. After Kayla finally finds a new friend, she feels like Mac steals her away. The show, however, is mainly about how Mac and Kayla share a bond because of their love of the ice. I recommend it to anyone who is looking for a fun show about family and friends." Nishka, 11, Massachusetts

Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to hello@theweekjunior.com.

THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST

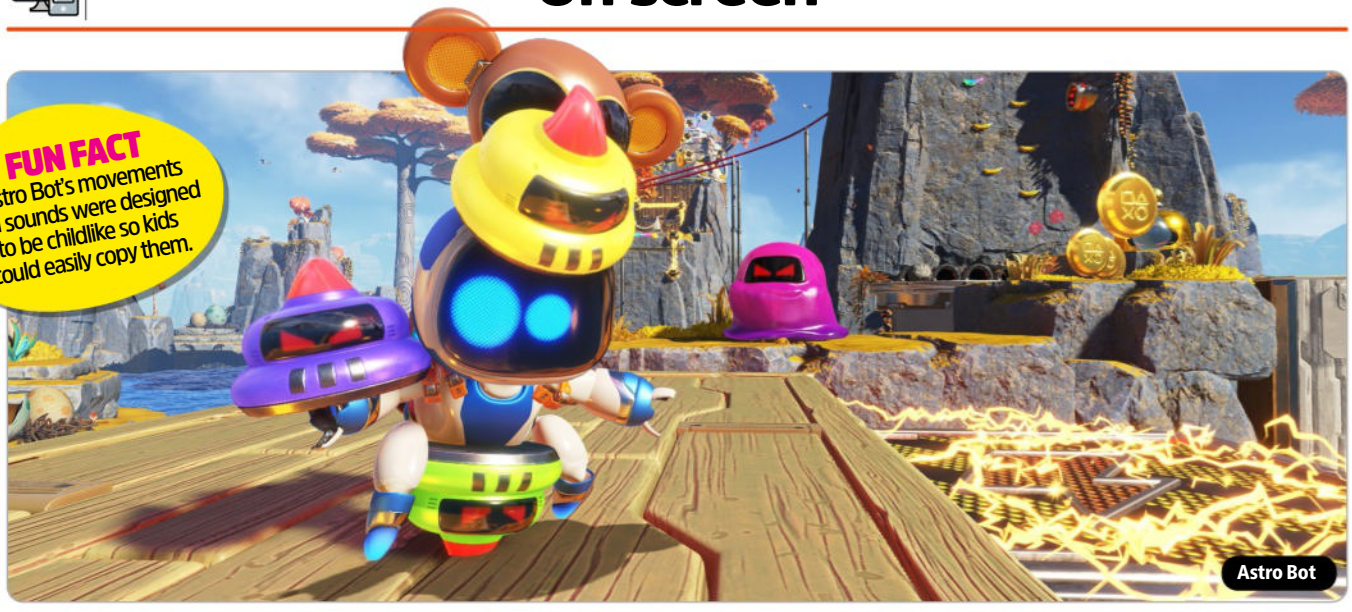
SharkFest
(National Geographic, Disney+, Hulu)
National Geographic has a new batch of shows about sharks, including one that follows filmmaker Bertie Gregory as he goes on a cage-free dive with great whites. Viewers can also see expeditions and learn about topics such as shark migration.

The Fairly OddParents: A New Wish
(Netflix)
In this sequel to the classic animated series *The Fairly OddParents*, a girl named Hazel moves to a new city where her neighbors Cosmo and Wanda have wish-granting powers. In the new second season, some of Hazel's adventures involve time travel, rock monsters, and talking teeth.



Electric Bloom
(Disney Channel)
Posey, Jade, and Tulip meet in high school, form a band, and later become pop stars in this new musical comedy series. The girls' older selves narrate the show and look back on their path to success, which includes navigating their differences and dealing with social media fame.

JASON GETZ/ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN (2); NETFLIX; NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC; NICKELODEON; DISNEY; ON LEFT PAGE: PARAMOUNT ANIMATION; GETTY IMAGES (4)



FUN FACT
Astro Bot's movements and sounds were designed to be childlike so kids could easily copy them.

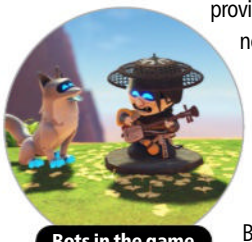
Astro Bot

Astro Bot gets five new levels

On July 10, one of the best games of 2024 got an update. Astro Bot, which is available exclusively for the PlayStation 5 (PS5), has five new levels that are available for free as downloadable content. With the additional content, the game will have more than 90 levels to play.

Astro Bot was released last September and was a big hit, selling more than 1.5 million copies in its first two months. It went on to be named the Video Game of the Year at one of the industry's major award ceremonies.

The action in the game begins when Astro Bot's ship is attacked by Space Bully Nebulax, an alien with a bad attitude. The ship crashes, and its parts are spread across six galaxies. Astro Bot has to ride his speeder across the galaxies, rescuing bots and putting his spaceship back together. The game has more than 300 bots to save, including ones that Team Asobi, Astro Bot's developer, delivered in updates after the game was released. Some new levels were also added.



Bots in the game

Earlier this year, Team Asobi introduced the Vicious Void Galaxy, which provided some of the most challenging Astro Bot action yet. The newest levels are part of that galaxy and are named Twin-Frog Trouble, Suck It Up, Handhold Havoc, and High Inflation. The fifth level was a secret when *The Week Junior* went to press.

In an announcement before the update, Team Asobi hinted that completing all of the Vicious Void "might lead to something really cool." They also revealed that there will be new Special Bots and that "a revengeful newcomer might join the crew."

PODCAST OF THE WEEK

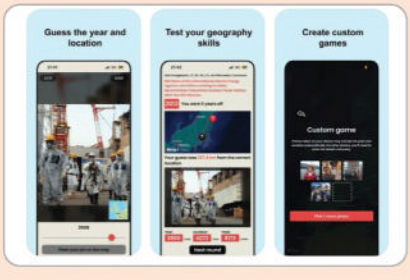
BE CALM ON AHWAY ISLAND

ahwayisland.com, major podcast platforms

This podcast's mission is to help kids appreciate the differences in themselves and others. Through meditations and weekly stories that include characters such as forest animals and dragons, listeners can learn to manage emotions and also wind down before bed.

Be Calm on Ahway Island

APP OF THE WEEK



TIMEGUESSR

Apple App Store, Google Play

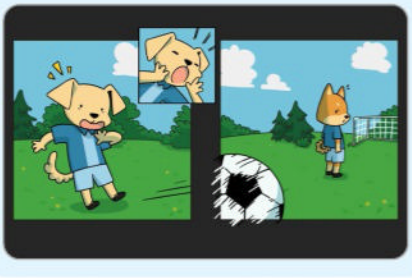
Test your geography and history knowledge using real historical photographs. You'll see an image, then try to guess when and where it was taken by choosing a year and placing a pin on a world map. You earn points based on your accuracy. The game is also online at timeguessr.com.

GAME OF THE WEEK

PUP CHAMPS

Steam, Apple App Store, Google Play

In this puzzle game, you help coach a soccer team made up of energetic puppies. Each level is set on a small grid, where you must use each puppy's unique skills to pass, dodge, and score goals. A big part of the challenge is that there is a limit to the number of moves you can make.



SONY INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT (2); SHEEP JAM PRODUCTIONS; TIMEGUESSR; AFTERBURN

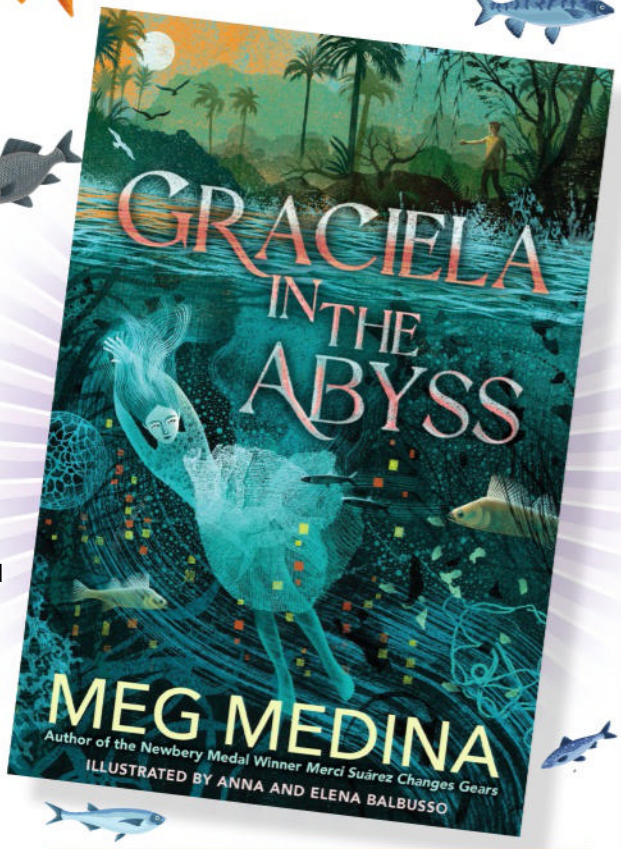
SUMMER OF READING FEATURED PICK

Graciela in the Abyss

By Meg Medina, illustrated by Anna and Elena Balbusso

(Candlewick)

In this fantasy novel, a 13-year-old girl is reborn as a sea spirit who gets to choose a new purpose. Graciela, who drowned 100 years earlier, has chosen to be an artist who turns discarded bottles into stunning sea glass and then deposits the glass to be discovered by beachcombers. Although she enjoys her new calling, she misses her human connections. That's why she clings to the bond she has developed with fellow spirit Amina. But Amina dreams of joining the Almas, the rulers of the spirit world. When an invitation from the Almas is sent to Amina, Graciela intercepts it because she doesn't want Amina to leave her. As Graciela heads to the surface, Jorge, a kind-hearted 12-year-old, is trying to discard a supernatural harpoon, which is a type of spear. Jorge knows his great-grandfather made the harpoon so an evil fisherman could kill sea spirits. Graciela and Jorge's paths put them on a collision course with each other, which may spell disaster for both the human and spirit worlds. Packed with action, the novel is sprinkled with mythical illustrations.


GRACIELA IN THE ABYSS
MEG MEDINA
Author of the Newbery Medal Winner Merci Suárez Changes Gears
ILLUSTRATED BY ANNA AND ELENA BALBUSSO

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR YOUR BOOK CLUB

Graciela in the Abyss masterfully combines the wonders of the undersea world with themes of adventure, responsibility, and loss. Here are questions to get a conversation going with friends and family who have also read the book.

What do you think Graciela's life would have been like if she hadn't drowned?

Why does Graciela say that being dead is hard work?

How were Graciela and Jorge connected to each other before they met in person?

Why is it difficult for Graciela and Jorge to be honest with each other?

Would Jorge have been able to pursue his dreams as an adult if his parents were alive?

If you were transformed into a sea spirit, what new calling would you follow?

2025 Summer of Reading

Our list of "The 50 Books Kids Love Most," details about entering our Summer of Reading sweepstakes, and more can be found at **kids.theweekjunior.com/summerofreading**.

Ask the Author Ambassador

Meg Medina was the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature from 2023 to 2024. She has won many writing awards, including the Newbery Medal for *Merci Suárez Changes Gears*. *Graciela in the Abyss* is her first fantasy novel.

Do you love the ocean?

I do, but I'm scared of it at the same time. The scariest yet most exciting aspect of the ocean to me is the abyss at the bottom of the sea. There are volcanoes and mountain ranges down there! I thought that would be a great setting for a book.

How long did it take you to write the story?

I worked on it for 12 years before I handed in the manuscript to my editor.

How did you keep the story from becoming too intense?

I tried to balance the scary moments with hopeful ones, and I also wrote many scenes that showed the characters being especially courageous.

Did you enjoy writing fantasy?

Yes, I found it exciting to have the chance to build my own world. Most of the fiction I've written has been set in the real world and features characters who spend their days going to school or work. In this book, I mixed what's known about the abyss with my imagination.

Where do you keep your Newbery Medal?

It's in a cabinet in my living room.

Favorite food at a cookout?

Burgers and watermelon are the best!

BOOK: COURTESY OF PUBLISHER; AUTHOR: COURTESY MEG MEDINA; GETTY IMAGES

HA HA! A northern flicker woodpecker makes a call that sounds similar to human laughter.

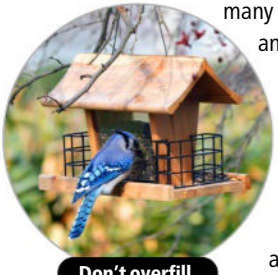
Create a safe habitat for birds

Find out how you can help the feathered friends in your neighborhood.

Birds need our help. Nearly 3 billion of them have disappeared from North America over the past five decades due to issues like habitat loss, pollution, and climate change. Some of the most affected species are common birds—the species that many people see every day—which include sparrows, blackbirds, warblers, and finches. With a few simple changes, you can help create a safe haven for birds near your home. Here's how to get started.

Offer safe shelter

To give birds a place to live, you can build or buy a nest box or birdhouse made of untreated, natural wood. Other materials, like plastic, can get too hot for birds and their young. To protect bird families from the rain, provide a roof that extends over the entrance. Carefully place the birdhouse where predators can't jump or climb onto it, such as on a smooth metal pole or safely under an eave.



Don't overfill your feeder!

Take care with bird feeders

If you provide bird seed in your yard, be sure to keep it dry. Seed can get damp in warm and humid conditions and can pass on harmful toxins to birds if it turns moldy. Consider filling your feeder no more than halfway so the seed isn't sitting out too long. Also sweep up old seeds and hulls from under the feeder frequently. And clean your feeder in the dishwasher or with hot water and a bottle brush (but no soap) at least once every two weeks. Let it thoroughly dry before refilling it with seed.

Protect insects

In the spring and summer breeding months, songbirds rely on insects to feed their young. But many people spray chemicals on their lawns and shrubs to kill insects, and this can harm the birds. Talk to your family about avoiding the use of chemicals around your yard.

Make windows visible

Every year, millions of birds accidentally fly into windows. That's because a bird flying through the air and looking at a window sees a reflection of the sky or trees instead of the glass. You can help prevent collisions with windows by making the glass more visible to birds. Talk to your family about keeping bug screens on windows year-round. With an adult's permission, you can also attach tape strips or adhesive decals to windows.

Bird nest facts

Nests can reveal fascinating facts about the birds that build them. Here are a few.

Signature styles **Nesting habits vary by species. For example, hummingbirds build tiny nests of moss and spider silk. Robins arrange sticks into a cup shape. Orioles weave plant fibers into nests that dangle from trees.**

New tricks **Research shows that some birds, like zebra finches, will watch other birds to learn nest-building methods.**

No place like home **Some birds, like bald eagles, return to the same nest every year, adding new materials to expand the nest each season.**

HAPPY ACCIDENT
Ice pops were invented in 1905 by 11-year-old Frank Epperson when he mistakenly left a drink with a stirring stick in it outdoors on a cold night.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the blender.

Make creamy chocolate cherry pops

Ingredients

- ⅓ cup sweetened condensed milk
- 1¼ cups unsweetened canned coconut milk
- 2 tablespoons dark cocoa powder
- ¾ teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ cup chopped dark chocolate chips
- Kosher salt
- ¼ cup cherry preserves

Instructions

1. In a blender, combine the sweetened condensed milk, coconut milk, cocoa powder, vanilla, chocolate chips, and a pinch of kosher salt. Pulse several times to combine.
2. Add the cherry preserves to the blender and pulse a few more times to blend.
3. Pour the mixture into small paper cups or ice pop molds. If you are using cups, cover the top of each one with foil, then add an ice pop stick to each. (The foil will help to hold the stick in place while it freezes.)
4. Freeze the ice pops until they're solid, about 8 hours or overnight.

Helpful tips

- Coconut milk makes the ice pops extra creamy, but you can substitute cow's milk if you like.
- If you use paper cups, simply tear the cup off the frozen pop when you're ready to eat it.
- If you use ice pop molds and are having trouble getting the frozen pops out of the molds, loosen them by dipping each mold in warm water for up to 30 seconds.

Enter The Week Junior's Nature Photo Contest!

Do you love taking photos of flowers, trees, and wildlife? If so, now is your chance to use your creativity, curiosity, and skills to enter The Week Junior's Nature Photo Contest. The entry form for 8- to 10- year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2025PhotoContest-8-10 and for 11- to 14-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2025PhotoContest-11-14. Winning entries will be featured in a September 2025 issue of the magazine. See official rules at theweekjunior.com/photocontestrules.

The contest deadline is July 28.

JOY HOWARD; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

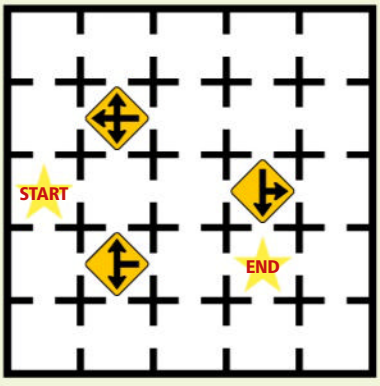
Word ladder

To change the word NOSE into the word CLIP, use each clue to fill in a word that is only one letter different from the word before it. If you get stuck, try solving from the bottom up.

	N O S E
It might be used to help fill a pool	▶
Person who greets the guests	▶
Amount required to buy something	▶
Layer of paint	▶
Have a conversation with someone	▶
What lips sometimes do when they get too dry	▶
Applaud	▶
	C L I P

DETOURS

Draw one continuous path from START to END that goes through every single square without crossing itself. For squares with signs, you may only enter at the arrow's base, and you may only make a turn in the direction of an arrow shown. (NEED A HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)



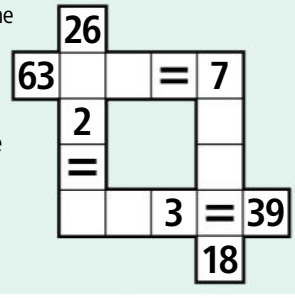
STEPPING STONES

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

Each figure hides the name of a seven-letter thing you see at a beach. To find each one, start anywhere and move in an unbroken path through letters that share a border (no jumping!), using each letter once.

Crossmath

Fill each empty box with a number or a mathematical symbol (+, −, ×, or ÷) to complete the equations across and down. A symbol can be used more than once.

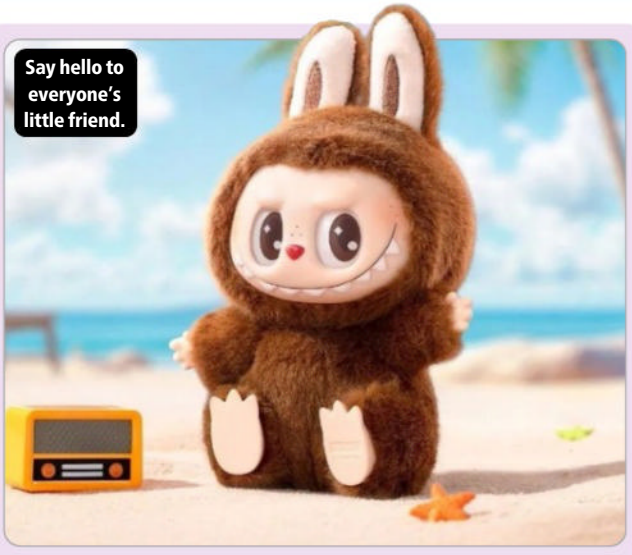


Spot the difference

These two pictures of Nathan's hot dog stand at Coney Island appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?

PUZZLES BY PUZZABILITY

Detours hint: Start by moving down.



Funny-looking dolls sell out fast

The world has gone crazy for Labubu dolls, which have been described as a cross between a creature from the book Where the Wild Things Are and an evil Teletubby. The characters were invented by artist Kasing Lung, who teamed up with a Chinese company to launch a line of toys. They became extremely popular after a K-pop band member shared a photo with one. Last month, a human-sized Labubu doll sold at an auction in China for more than $150,000. "It's amazing that so many people love it," said Lung.

Shopping for a special party

Many preschoolers say dinosaurs or space are their favorite things, but a Florida boy named Joey is a fan of the grocery store Trader Joe's. So for his fourth birthday, his parents threw him a Trader Joe's–themed party, complete with a red and white bouncy house and an area where people could create flower bouquets like the ones sold in the store. They served lots of Trader Joe's foods, including a birthday cake made from six Mini Sheet Cakes. Guests left with goodie bags of snacks and a "Trader Joey's" receipt.

Dachshund wins dog derby

In front of 2,000 cheering fans, Bucky the dachshund emerged as the star of the Meadowlands Racetrack Wiener Dog Derby. In the New Jersey event, dozens of sausage dogs run 30 feet to their waiting owners. Last year, Bucky got distracted and didn't finish the race. But this year, owner Adriana Smith said, "He had the zoomies." Focusing on the ball Smith held, Bucky dashed down the track and left the other dogs in the dust. He won $500 and some doggy ice cream. "We are very proud of him," Smith said.

Music lessons in miniature

Scientists in the UK have created the world's smallest violin. After a praying mantis in a lab was seen moving its legs to music, the team decided to further test its musical abilities. They designed a mini violin for the insect using lightweight wood and tiny steel strings, with a bow to match. The instrument measures less than an inch long. After consulting music teachers and animal behavior experts, the researchers are now trying to teach the mantis to play a song. Is this story real, or did we fiddle with the truth?*

*Fake! Scientists did make the world's tiniest violin, but it's not playable—even by insects. To test new technology that builds extremely tiny structures, they created a microscopic image of a violin that is smaller than a human hair.

POP MART; JENNI GLESTER (2); LISA PHOTO; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

Editor's note

July 4, a day when festive celebrations typically take place in communities across the US, instead turned into a day of sorrow in central Texas when the Guadalupe River overflowed with very little warning and caused devastation in Kerr County (p2). All of us at *The Week Junior* were very sad to hear about the people who died, including children. We are also grateful for the emergency workers who rescued hundreds of people and prevented a terrible situation from becoming worse. As is always the case during disasters, many ordinary people also stepped in to help their fellow neighbors. If your family would like to help, several nonprofit organizations are accepting donations to provide food, shelter, and other necessities to those in need. As the recovery continues, we send wishes of compassion, strength, and hope to everyone who is affected by this tragedy.

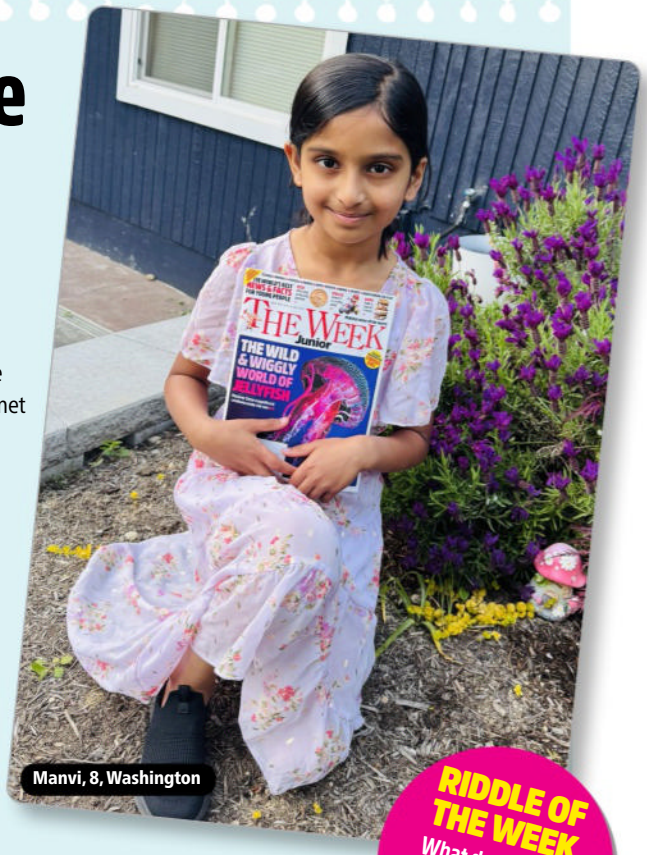
Andrea Barbalich
Editorial Director

CHARITY OF THE WEEK

Sunrise Association

This organization works to bring joy to children who have been diagnosed with cancer. It provides free day camps designed specifically to accommodate children who are undergoing cancer treatment. Siblings are also welcome to attend. Besides camps, the group hosts activities for kids in hospitals and provides virtual programming. Find out more at sunriseassociation.org.

Helping the planet at school



Manvi, 8, Washington

"With help from our teacher, our class created the Green Team. It all started on Earth Day, when we learned how to take care of our planet by reusing and recycling. Everyone got really excited and wanted to make a difference. We noticed that our school lunchroom didn't have a recycling bin, so we decided to change that. I was the leader of a group that met with the principal and the school custodian to share our plan. They said yes! Starting next fall, our school will recycle and compost at lunch. Thank you, *The Week Junior*, for inspiring us with your amazing ideas!"

Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at *hello@theweekjunior.com.*

RIDDLE OF THE WEEK

What do we often identify just by looking at their spine?

A book

SUMMER OF READING

Enter to win books!

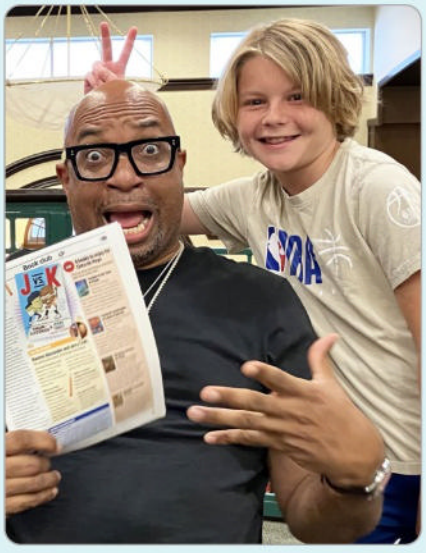
This is the fifth issue of our Summer of Reading campaign! We hope you enjoy our interview with Author Ambassador Meg Medina and a review of her new book *Graciela in the Abyss* (p23). Our reading challenge continues! Once you've finished any three books, go to tinyurl.com/TWJUS-ReadingChallenge2025 with an adult to enter our sweepstakes. Five kids will win! All winners will be drawn at random. The deadline to enter is August 8. For our list of "The 50 Books Kids Love Most," go to kids.theweekjunior.com/summerofreading.

THE WEEK Junior IT'S YOUR TURN Email your news, views, and photos to *hello@theweekjunior.com.*

Your turn

YOUR PHOTOS

We'd love to see pictures you've taken or pictures with you in them! Have an adult email them to us at *hello@theweekjunior.com*, along with anything you would like us to know about what's happening in the photo.



"I got to meet author Kwame Alexander at a book signing near my house, and I took *The Week Junior* with me!" Amos, 11, Florida

"I really enjoy bowling with my family, so I was thrilled to find an article about it in *The Week Junior*!" Juliana, 8, Mississippi

"We made the How To recipe for pesto pasta, but instead of using broccoli, we used carrots. It was yummy!" Ojas, 10, Texas

Teacher OF THE WEEK

Teacher's Name: **Mr. Walterman**

School: **Chisholm Trail Middle School**

"Mr. Walterman is an amazing teacher. He always makes us laugh and smile with all the fun activities he plans. But when it comes to the lessons, Mr. Walterman is 10 times better. He makes the lessons and activities fun and engaging for everyone. And when someone doesn't understand, Mr. Walterman is patient and helps us until we do."

Hudson, 12, Kansas

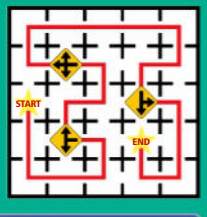
Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week!
Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

Puzzle answers (from page 26)

Word ladder
NOSE
HOSE
HOST
COST
COAT
CHAT
CHAP
CLAP
CLIP

Stepping stones
blanket, seagull



						26
63	÷	9	=	7		
2				+		
=				11		
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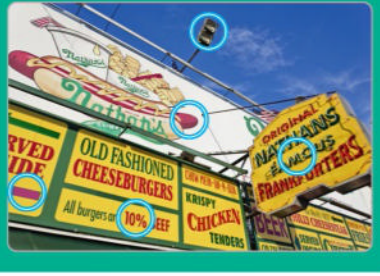
				18		



Quiz answers (from page 30)
1 b) 70.5 **2** Infrared light **3** b) 1990 **4** False. They are increasing in big cities. **5** c) The Vicious Void **6** c) 90 **7** False. Most are male. **8** Mosaiculture **9** True **10** b) Rihanna **11** River Heights **12** b) 10 **13** True **14** a) Amina **15** Bucky

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your first name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.

How much of this week's news can you remember?

1 How many hot dogs did Joey Chestnut eat in 10 minutes to win Nathan's Famous International Hot Dog Eating Contest?

a) 68.5 b) 70.5 c) 72.5

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

2 Scientists in China have developed contact lenses that allow people to see what kind of light?

3 In what year did the Americans with Disabilities Act become law?

a) 1980 b) 1990 c) 2000

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

4 True or false? Peregrine falcon populations are declining in big cities in the US.

True ☐ False ☐

5 In the video game Astro Bot, five new levels were added to what galaxy?

a) The Brutal Burst b) The Nasty Nebula c) The Vicious Void

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

6 The 14th Dalai Lama recently turned what age?

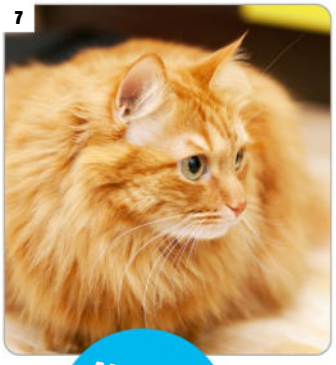
a) 70 b) 80 c) 90

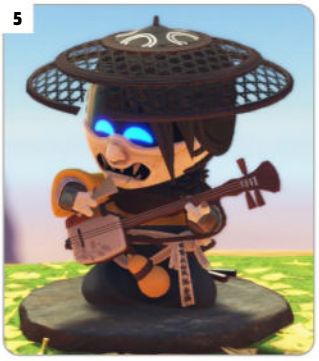
a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

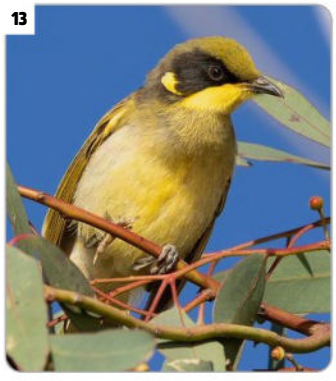
7 True or false? Research has found that most orange cats are female.

True ☐ False ☐

8 What is the name of the art style used in the *Alice's Wonderland* exhibition at the Atlanta Botanical Garden?







9 True or false? Sue Bird is the first-ever managing director of the USA Basketball Women's National Team.

True ☐ False ☐

10 Which music star voices Smurfette in the new musical film *The Smurfs*?

a) Beyoncé

b) Rihanna

c) Taylor Swift

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

11 What is the name of the town where fictional detective Nancy Drew lives?

12 How many times has Mexico won the Concacaf Gold Cup?

a) 8

b) 10

c) 12

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

13 True or false? Helmeted honeyeaters are the official bird of Victoria, Australia.

True ☐ False ☐

14 In the book *Graciela in the Abyss*, which character wants to join the leaders of the spirit world?

a) Amina

b) Graciela

c) Jorge

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

15 What is the name of the dachshund who won this year's Meadowlands Racetrack Wiener Dog Derby?

THE WEEK Junior

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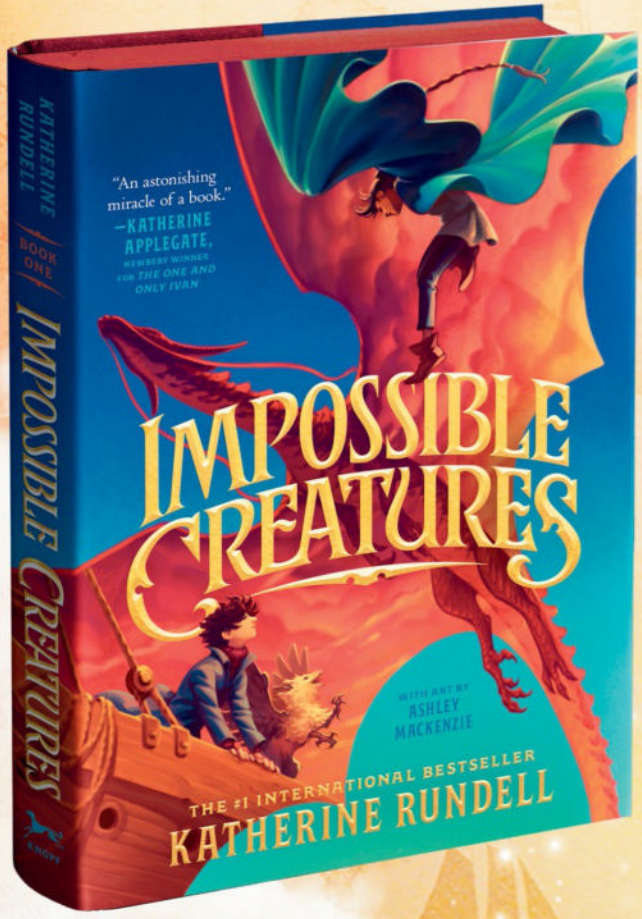

"IMPOSSIBLE TO PUT DOWN."
—Ty, 6th grade

"ADVENTUROUS AND THRILLING!"
—Rocco, 5th grade

"AN ACTION-PACKED JOURNEY."
—Greyson, 4th grade

EXPLORE THE WORLD'S LAST MAGICAL PLACE, WHERE CREATURES OF MYTH ARE REAL—AND IN DANGER. AND DON'T MISS THE SEQUEL, COMING THIS FALL!

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